DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DATE
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
IS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

1941

JAN 2 0 1979

Dear Ms. Moran:

I have been asked to respond to your letter of December 22 to President Carter concerning the United States response to the Guyana tragedy.

The tragedy of Jonestown has no parallel. On Sunday, November 19, the U.S. Government faced a crisis situation in Guyana. An American Congressman had been killed as well as other Americans in his party. A settlement believed to include about 1000 Americans was involved, and its situation was uncertain. It was apparent that the limited transportation and other resources of the Government of Guyana might be insufficient to cope with these events in an isolated area 120 miles from the capital. Medical evacuation for the injured Americans by U.S. military aircraft was immediately authorized, and the U.S. Government offered assistance to the Government of Guyana to prevent further loss of life.

The Guyanese indicated they needed helicopter lift and other support. As events progressed, it became clear that there were large numbers of Americans dead. For a time, it was believed that there might be many survivors in the jungle, and the U.S. adjusted and increased its assistance to help the search by Guyana police and military. Finally, when the number of dead was clear, the operational requirements were to continue support of the extensive ongoing investigation of serious crimes and to identify, treat with dignity, and remove the bodies as quickly as possible to a facility that could deal with this immense problem. Extensive mortuary facilities were essential in the process of identification and investigation. Only the U.S. military had the equipment and facilities to handle this enormous problem. The removal of the bodies from Guyana was at the specific request of the Government of Guyana.

Ms. Evelyn K. Moran,
Township Clerk,
Rockaway Township,
19 Mt. Hope Road,

The President, acting under his constitutional authority as Chief Executive and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, ordered the departments of our government to take action to deal with this emergency. The operational decisions within the U.S. Government in this unique situation were made by the Secretary of State in conjunction with some of his Cabinet colleagues.

The federal government does not pay the expense of bringing back the remains of Americans who died abroad. That is a responsibility of their families or, if no next of kin can be found, the country where the death occurred is responsible for burial. It was evident, however, that it was beyond the ability of individual families or of the facilities available in Guyana to resolve the unprecedented problems that characterized this situation. In fact it was not even clear who the next of kin were without identification being established. The families of those who died at Jonestown are, of course, expected to bear the responsibility for the disposition of the remains in the United States.

The costs to the United States Government of an effort of this magnitude obviously are considerable although substantially less than the $8 million figure used in some press reports, but it will be some time before the total is known. The Office of Management and Budget, together with other agencies, is reviewing the financial aspects.

The Department of Justice is fully exploring possible legal remedies which can be used to recover the cost the U.S. Government has incurred in removing and processing the bodies of Americans from Guyana. It will be some time before the results of these efforts are known, but you may be assured that we continue to make every effort to keep the costs to the U.S. Government to the minimum necessary.

If you have any further questions, you may wish to contact me on (202) 632-2621.

Sincerely,

Ashley C. Hewitt, Director
Office of Caribbean Affairs
Bureau of Inter-American Affairs

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT

RF

ACTION SLIP — MARKED

Unclassified
(Attachment Classification)

S/S CONTROL NUMBER
7824752

ACTION ASSIGNED TO: ARA

DATE ~~12/29~~ 12/30

(Action Office Instructions on Reverse)

ACTION REQUESTED

___ STATE TO NSC MEMO
___ STATE TO

✓ DIRECT REPLY

___ REPLY FOR SIGNATURE BY _____

___ with Draft reply for signature by _____

___ with Comment or Recommendation

✓ provide info copy under cover of State-NSC transmittal form

___ provide comeback copy for _____

___ RECOMMENDATION FOR _____
___ with Memorandum for the President

___ APPROPRIATE HANDLING

___ FOR YOUR INFORMATION

DUE IN S/S BY: 1/9
CLEAR WITH: —

REMARKS/SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS:

___ S	___ UNA	___ A	✓ SCA	
✓ D	___ S/AB	___ CU	___ AF	
✓ P	___ S/AR	___ EB	___ ARA	
___ E	___ S/MS	___ H	___ EA	
___ T	___ S/P	___ IGA	___ EUR	
___ M	✓ S/PRS	___ INR	___ NEA	
___ C	___ S/CPR	___ IO	___ ACDA	
___ S/S	___ S/IG	___ L	___ AID	
___ S/S-O	___ S/IL	___ OES		
___ S/S-EX	___ S/NM	___ PA		
___ S/S-S	___ D/HA	___ PM		
___ TEAM A	___ D/IWY			
___ TEAM B	___ D/LOS			
✓ TEAM C	___ M/CT			
___ TEAM D	___ M/DG			
✓ S/S-I (RF)	___ M/EEO			
	___ M/MO			

FROM: KARIN WARPULA (NAME)

S/S-S:	A	B	✓ C	D
	21522	28338	28348	28062

ID DOS 781229045 THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

REFERRAL 7824752

TO: DOS DATE: DEC 29 78

REPLY: DIRECT REPLY. FURNISH INFORMATION COPY

IF MORE THAN 9 DAYS DELAY IS ENCOUNTERED PLEASE TELEPHONE MS. BYRNE 456-2113

BASIC CORRESPONDENCE AND CONTROL SHEET AND COPY OF RESPONSE (OR DRAFT) MUST BE RETURNED TO: AGENCY LIAISON (ROOM 94) WHITE HOUSE.

REMARKS:

X LETTER MAILGRAM TELEGRAM DATED: DEC 22 78

TO: PRESIDENT CARTER

FROM: EVELYN K. MORAN, TOWNSHIP CLERK,
19 MT. HOPE ROAD, ROCKAWAY, NJ 07866

SUBJECT: CON RETURN OF BODIES FROM JONESTOWN

RESPONSE:

CLOSED OUT:

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT:

PAMELA ZINN

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR OF CORRESPONDENCE

5/
DOS

(201) 627-72

ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP
19 MT. HOPE ROAD
Rockaway, New Jersey 07866

824752

EVELYN K. MORAN CMC
Township Clerk

December 22, 1978

President Jimmy Carter
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I respectfully submit to you the attached resolution adopted by the Township Council of the Township of Rockaway, Morris County, New Jersey.

The Township Council urges that you consider the said subject matter in depth and act favorably on it.

Very truly yours,

Evelyn K. Moran, CMC
Township Clerk

EKM/kaa

Att.

(201) 627 7200

ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP
19 MT HOPE ROAD
Rockaway New Jersey 07866

EVELYN MORAN (MC)
Township Clerk

TOWNSHIP OF ROCKAWAY
RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION WITH RESPECT TO EXPENDITURE OF UNITED STATES FUNDS RELATING TO THE JONESTOWN GUYANA MASS SUICIDES

WHEREAS, it appears that the United States Government intends to exp nd relevant funds to return persons formerly belonging to the Jonestown Cult to the United States; and

WHEREAS, it appears that the United States Government has already expended in excess of $9 million to return persons formerly belonging to the People's Temple, commonly known as the Jonestown Cult; and

WHEREAS, the United States Government further intends to spend additional funds to return the remaining people and/or provide burial for the deceased; and

WHEREAS, there appears to be funds in the People's Temple to help defray the cost;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Council of the Township of Rockaway as follows:

1. That the Township of Rockaway is opposed to the expenditure of federal funds to return those persons formerly participating in the Jonestown Cult to the United States;

2. That the Township of Rockaway recommends that the federal government recoup the funds already expended and any funds to be expended from the People's Temple or Jonestown Cult.

3. That a copy of this resolution be directed to the President of the United States and those federal legislators representing New Jersey.

I HEREBY CERTIFY the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Township Council of the Township of Rockaway at a duly convened meeting held on December 5, 1978.

Evelyn K Moran

Township Clerk